

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3361
INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 6874

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR PINT IN
SUBJECT: INDO-NEPALESE RELATIONS

REF: A. KATHMANDU 1935 (NOTAL), B. NEW DELHI 5724

1. IN A MAY 9 CONVERSATION, C.V. RANGANATHAN, MEA JOINT
SECRETARY RESPONSIBLE FOR NEPAL, GAVE EMBASSY OFFICERS THE
FOLLOWING RUNDOWN ON INDO-NEPALESE RELATIONS:

2. INTEREST IN INDIA IN THE B.P. (KOIRALA CASE AND INTERNAL
NEPALESE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IS NOT JUST LIMITED TO A
GROUP WITHIN THE JANATA PARTY. THE INTEREST IN WIDE-SPREAD
AND INEVITABLY WILL INFLUENCE INDO-NEPALESE RELATIONS.
RANGANATHAN CONFIDENTLY ASSERTED THAT THE GON WOULD NOT
HURT KOIRALA, BUT WAS NOT MORE SPECIFIC AS TO WHETHER
THIS MEANT B.P. WOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO A LONG
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CONFINEMENT. (COMMENT: THE TONE OF HIS REMARKS ALMOST
SUGGESTED THAT THE GON HAD INFORMED THE GOI THAT IT
WOULD SOMEHOW DEFENSE THE CASE.)

3. ON THE EVE OF THE DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY IN INDIA,
THE KING, RANGANATHAN SAID, WAS ABOUT TO INTRODUCE
POLITICAL REFORMS. THIS ABORTED WHEN MRS. GANDHI CHOSE

HER AUTHORITARIAN PATH. THE JOINT SECRETARY SAID THAT THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN NEPAL COULD BE LIBERALIZED AND IMPLIED THAT IT MUST BE LIBERALIZED. THIS COULD BE DONE WITHOUT ENDANGERING THE EXISTENCE OF THE MONARCHY. INDIA HAS A MAJOR INTEREST IN CONTINUED POLITICAL STABILITY IN NEPAL AND BELIEVED THAT THE MONARCHY WAS A CRITICAL ELEMENT IN THE SYSTEM. THE GOI WOULD CONTINUE ITS POLICY OF NOT ALLOWING INDIAN SOIL TO BE USED AS A BASE OF OPERATIONS AGAINST THE MONARCHY.

4. THE OUTCOME OF THE STATE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN THE BORDER STATES OF UP AND BIHAR WAS IMPORTANT FOR THE FUTURE OF INDO-NEPALESE RELATIONS. BECAUSE GOODS AND PERSONS FROM NEPAL TRANSITED THOSE STATES, THE ATTITUDE OF THE STATE OFFICIALS TOWARD NEPAL WAS VERY IMPORTANT. RANGANATHAN IMPLIED THAT JANATA VICTORIES WOULD INCREASE INDIAN PRESSURE FOR LIBERALIZATION IN NEPAL.

5. IN GENERAL, RANGANATHAN WAS UPBEAT IN DESCRIBING INDO-NEPALESE RELATIONS AND SAID THAT PROGRESS WAS BEING MADE IN REACHING AGREEMENT ON THE HYDRO-ELECTRIC, FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS. ACCORDING TO THE NEPALESE AMBASSADOR, FOREIGN MINISTER VAJPAYEE PLANS TO VISIT NEPAL BUT WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE PROGRESS MADE ON THE TRADE AND TRANSIT AGREEMENT BEFORE HE DEPARTS. VAJPAYEE, THE AMBASSADOR SAID, WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, DELAY HIS VISIT UNTIL A COMPLETE AGREEMENT WAS WORKED OUT.

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6. SPEAKING TO THE PRESS IN GWALIOR (MADHYA PRADESH) MAY 9, FOREIGN MINISTER VAJPAYEE SAID THAT WHILE THE GOI WAS AWARE OF THE PEOPLE'S ANXIETY OVER THE CONTINUED DETENTION OF B. P. KOIRALA, IT COULD NOT INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF ANY COUNTRY. HE SAID THAT SINCE INDIA WAS A DEMOCRACY, PEOPLE WERE FREE TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS ON ISSUES, INCLUDING KOIRALA'S DETENTION. SCHNEDIER

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